

REMARKS

Applicants have amended independent claims 3, 55, and 69 to each recite an article comprising a substrate and a layer of palladium metal on the substrate defining a surface. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification, for example, on page 20, lines 17-20. Thus, no new matter has been added.

Applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephone interview conducted on November 19, 2008. The present response addresses substantive points discussed during the interview. Specifically, the palladium metal layer of the article was discussed. Accordingly, the present response is believed to constitute a complete written statement of the reasons presented in the interview as warranting favorable action, as required by 37 C.F.R. §1.133.

Claims 3-15, 55-59, and 69-75 are pending for examination.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 3-15, 55-59, and 69 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Schnur, *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,079,600 ("Schnur"). The Patent Office states that the specification does not teach the "basic and novel characteristics" of a surface "consisting essentially of" palladium, and thus, the Patent Office has interpreted "consisting essentially of" as equivalent to "comprising" in formulating its rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Schnur.

Applicants note that Schnur nowhere teaches or suggests the use of a layer of palladium metal on the substrate defining a surface, as is recited in independent claims 3, 55, and 69, as amended. Instead, Schnur only discloses palladium chloride (PdCl₂), which is of course a different material than palladium metal, and does not teach or suggest that the palladium chloride is present as a layer in the article (indeed, Schnur does not even teach or suggest that the palladium chloride is present on the substrate, having been washed off with water "copiously," see Col. 8, lines 49-51). In contrast, the instant specification teaches the use of a layer of palladium that is deposited onto the surface of an article. The palladium is deposited onto the surface, e.g., such that the metal can serve as a resist, portions of which can be dissolved using an etchant. See, for example, page 20, lines 16-27 of the instant specification. Since Schnur does not teach or suggest such a palladium metal layer, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 70-75 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schnur in view of Clark, *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,728,591 ("Clark").

Claims 70-75 each depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 69. For at least the reasons explained above with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Schnur alone, the premise of the rejection of claim 69 (that Schnur teaches all of the limitations of claim 69) is believed to be incorrect. Accordingly, while Applicants do not concede that there would have been any rational reason to combine Schnur and Clark in the manner suggested in the Office Action, the present rejection cannot stand, regardless. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 70-75 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the application in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, any necessary extension of time is hereby requested. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any

deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith to our Deposit Account No. 23/2825, under Docket No. H0498.70079US01.

Dated: 11/25, 2008
X11/28/2008X

Respectfully submitted,

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